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**“The Politics of Community Organizing for Social and  
Political Change in Muslim Communities”**

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This paper will critically explore some of the existing theories, approaches and models on social (community) action as they relate to the contemporary struggles for social and political changes faced by Muslim communities residing in the West. Drawing from the literature of Paulo Freire, Saul Alinsky and Bill Moyers in their models of community conscientization, political engagement and empowerment for political change, this paper argues how these dominant models of community development and participatory democracy, although critically valuable, nevertheless fail to fully capture and address the particular complexities and barriers faced by many Muslims engaged in community efforts for social and political change. This paper also argues that the existing normative approaches and models for community development and mobilization, for the most part, have had very little to offer Muslim communities in the West currently engaged in civil and human rights struggles at the “grassroots” local level. This is largely because of the broad and simplistic assumptions made in theory and approaches to community social action that fail to anchor the social, political and economic realities and conditions of racially minoritized and immigrant-based communities in their efforts for structural reforms. This paper will focus on the politics of community organizing in Muslim communities in the West in the context of complex power relations, plurality and conflict, and the politics of civic engagement and disengagement.